DA BAIL RECORDS ATTACKED

NEW ORLEANS
STATES-ITEM

VOL. 93—NO. 24 MONDAY, JULY 7, 1969 PRICE 10c

A bail bond company has charged the Orleans Parish District Attorney's office is using inaccurate records to try to collect $34,500 in bail bond forfeitures from it.

Attorneys for United Bonding Company Inc. filed a petition in Criminal District Court last Thursday asking that the DA's office be enjoined from collecting $34,500 in alleged bail bond forfeitures in 32 separate cases.

Some of the cases date back to 1961.

ATTORNEY Anthony D'Antonio, representing United, said in 18 of the 32 cases he feels he has solid grounds for holding that the bonds should not be forfeited.

D'Antonio admitted that in some of the cases, the bail bonds should be forfeited.

However, he cited instances where clients of United were in custody but the DA's office was still trying to collect the bail bond.

IN FIVE separate cases where the DA's office is trying to collect, Criminal District Courts have set aside forfeiture proceedings, D'Antonio's petition alleges.

In another eight cases, the petition claims an assistant district attorney, Gerald Aurillo, issues notices of trial to defendants and the bonding company but not to witnesses.

If the defendants showed up, the case was dismissed but in the eight instances where the defendant didn't appear, the bail bonds were forfeited.

D'ANTONIO SAID he believes Aurillo's procedures "are highly questionable."

D'Antonio said United had been lax in not contesting some of the bail bond forfeitures sooner, but added he only had been retained by the company recently.

D'ANTONIO'S PETITION held that the DA's records of bail bond forfeitures are inadequate insofar as United Bonding is concerned.

In another case pending, attorneys for Maryland National Insurance Company, another bail bonding firm, say their bail bond forfeitures have exceeded $1 million without any effort by the DA's office to collect the money.

In the same matter, two attorneys representing Maryland National have been indicted by the Orleans Parish Grand Jury on charges of corrupt influence in connection with attempts to bribe the first assistant to District Atty. Jim Garrison.

THE INDICTMENTS against Milton Masinter and Thomas Toranto were lodged July 3. They are charged with intending to influence Assistant DA Charles R. Ward who has since resigned his post.

The petition from United for an injunction against the DA's office was allotted to Judge Frank Shea, who will be on vacation for a month.

Also allotted today was the indictment against Masinter and Toranto which was placed in the court of Judge Edward A. Haggerty.